June 1997
Vol 4 No 6

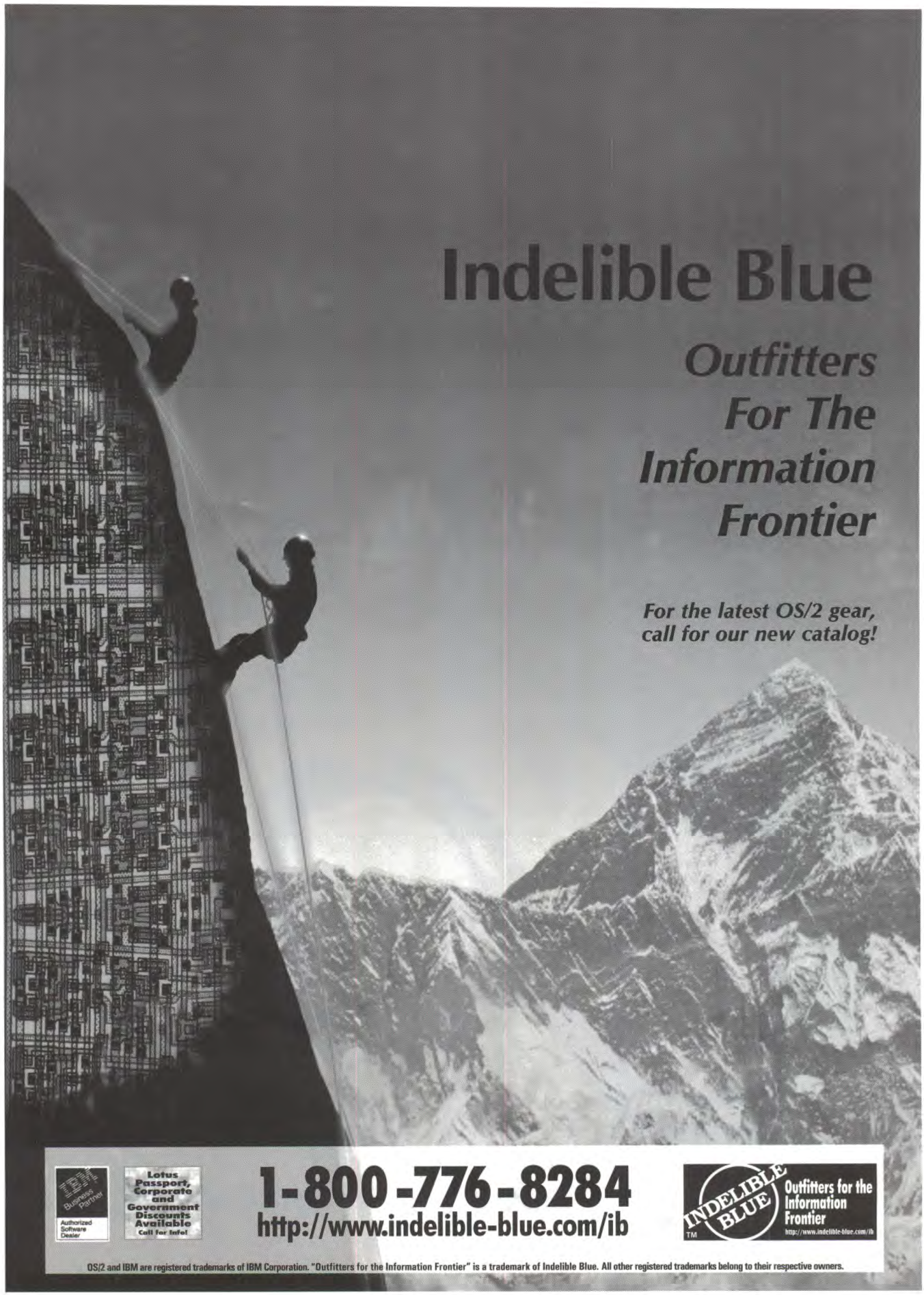
# extended attributes

Phoenix OS/2 Society

The magazine of the OS/2 community

$2.95 US ($3.50 Canada)

## Speech recognition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*keyphrases*

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## extended attributes


*extended attributes* is the award winning monthly magazine of the Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc.

This issue of *extended attributes* was produced using OS/2, DeScribe 5.0, Lotus Word Pro, FrameMaker 5.01, Enhanced Editor 6.03, TrueSpectra Photo>Graphics, and Impos/2. Camera ready images were printed on an IBM Lexmark 4039 10R laser printer at 600 dpi. Printing was done by Adcraft Printing, Inc, Phoenix, AZ.

Deadline for article submissions is the 5th of the month prior to issue. Send articles to editor@possi.org or the Society's mailing address. Email reviews to Steve Gurnick (see next page). Email SIG news to Ernie Fisch (see next page).

For change of address, send an email to editor@possi.org or mail the form in the center of the magazine to the Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc. *extended attributes* is mailed at bulk rate—the US Post Office will not forward!

Approximate circulation of this issue: 650.



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# Warpstock

*by Bill Schindler, editor-in-chief*

The OS/2 Marketplace conference set in motion two major events: the founding of the International OS/2 Technical Trade Association (see page 15) and Warpstock.

Warpstock will be a major conference for OS/2 small office/home office (SOHO) and individual end-users. It was originally envisioned at The OS/2 Marketplace as an "OS/2 love-fest."

Warpstock will provide an opportunity for OS/2 software vendors and OS/2 SOHO and individual users to meet. There are also plans for training sessions and presentations.

Felix Cruz, the sales and marketing director for SofTouch Systems — and one of the key promoters of Warpstock — said in a recent press release, "In the 1960's, young men and women associated Woodstock with the cause of individual freedom of expression. The millions of computer users who use OS/2 Warp as their operating system also made a choice; they looked for an alternative better than the one suggested by the 'establishment.'"

Warpstock will be held in Southern California (planned for the Orange County/Los Angeles area) on October 25 and 26, 1997. The Web site is at `www.basin.com/os2/warpstock.html`.

People in places as far away as Canada are already talking about carpooling. (The Society may have enough members in the Phoenix area to justify renting a bus. If you'd like to help investigate doing that, please email `board@possi.org`.)

This event is getting a lot of support from the user community and from vendors. Many IBMers, including ones higher up in the organization, are also showing enthusiasm for the project.

Warpstock will be a blast, I'm sure, but it's also an important message. This event is by-and-for individual users of OS/2, not the corporate users that IBM focuses on. A successful Warpstock could gain maind share for our favorite operating system, both inside IBM and in the world at large.

I hope to see you there!


# Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc

The Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc (POSSI) is an organization of computer users with an interest in IBM's OS/2 operating system.

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*.on the bitstream*

# Whispering Suite things in my ear

*by Esther Schindler*

Perhaps the most visible OS/2 software provider is Lotus Development. Many of us turn to Lotus because they have the only easily-available cross platform suite of applications. On April 17, I had the opportunity to talk with Lotus' Allen Stalvey (the senior product manager) and Michael Steinberg (the OS/2 SmartSuite product marketing manager). I asked them many of the questions that OS/2 users ask me.

## What's the OS/2 SmartSuite's current status?

**Allen Stalvey**: In our weekly status meetings, we go over the schedule for each individual product and for the shared components. We are looking really good to make our targetted fourth quarter ship date. We're exciting about the status of the builds at this point in time. A lot is involved in this particular effort because this is the first 32-bit suite from Lotus for OS/2, with the first version of Approach and Organizer for OS/2. Plus there are the shared components, such as TeamMail, TeamReview, SmartIcons, and Chart; these functions are used by all the SmartSuite products with shared DLLs.

We're excited about our progress to date and we are on schedule. All the teams are doing what they're supposed to be doing. But that doesn't mean we don't run into "blocking bugs" (where we can't go any further until one item is fixed). This is the most complex suite ever developed for OS/2, but we're enthusiastic about our progress up to this point. We're talking about plans for the third-quarter beta already.

## How would POSSI members get involved in the beta?

AS: Watch the web site at `www.lotus.com/smartsuite/os2` on the "News" page. Historically the beta process starts with the Lotus representative who nominates beta sites. We'll see what we can do.

## What in the OS/2 SmartSuite are you most proud of?

We now have (in the 96 product set) a set of products that have identical file formats. We also have comparable functions and features across versions; before the '96 edition, Freelance for OS/2 didn't have tabular text or an outliner view. With SmartSuite 96 we were able to bring out a set of products that are OS/2 equivalents of their Windows counterparts. (That remains a focus, of course, for SmartSuite 97.) That's really a result of using a common code base for Windows and OS/2.

**Michael Steinberg**: I'm pleased that we're looking at products that meet the Lotus standard for very high quality. I like showing the products—you really do get the oohs and the aahs. And I'm looking forward to having those [oohs and ahhs] in the other products because I know there's a lot of people waiting for them.

## Some critics suggest that, if they locked five programmers in a room with a supply of pizza and Jolt cola, the whole SmartSuite could have been completed long ago. Why has it taken so long?

AS: Let me say that it has not taken this long due to any lack of focus, commitment, dedication, or resources that are full time dedicated to the OS/2 effort. It has taken as long as it has exclusively due to technical issues.

I know that many of our customers "heard" (though it was not an official announcement) that Lotus intended to release SmartSuite 96 for OS/2 within 60-90 days of the release of SmartSuite 96 for Windows 95. We made two mistakes. First, we allowed sharing of our most aggressive plan aloud with the industry. Second, IBM and Lotus underestimated the effort involved in completing the Open32 API set (formerly known as the Developer API Extensions, or DAX). We shipped the Suite with FixPack 26, and that FixPack wasn't available until the time we shipped. It was more challenging than we imagined to get the API set completed.

The good news is that in spite of the challenge, IBM and Lotus both remain committed and dedicated to get a quality set of products out there. We stuck with it, we continued in spite of the pain of delivering it that late. It was painful for all of us, including myself. We (a team of over 125 individuals totally dedicated to OS/2 SmartSuite's development, documentation, and quality assurance) do truly care about the OS/2 releases.

We're working closely with IBM to deliver quality products in a timely fashion. We're doing all we can to deliver on time and with high quality.

You're going to ask me, "Why were we told at the Merlin launch that we would be delivered in the first half?" Now we're saying "in the fourth quarter." Customers will assume that we just don't care about OS/2 and that OS/2 is on the back burner. That's just not true—we have 125 people involved. Once again we shared an aggressive internal plan. A couple of things have changed since then. One of them is that our focus had been on 1-2-3 '96; that became 1-2-3 '97, which was not available on any platform until just last month. The schedule change for 1-2-3 impacted us this year on the 97 suite because we'd been focused on the 96 1-2-3; that's what we were thinking about at the Merlin launch.

The second issue that changed our schedule is that we do need about 50 new Open32 APIs for the 97 suite. IBM is currently actively focused on developing them for us. Also, Approch and Organizer are a new effort on the OS/2 desktop. Another item that is taking a little longer is that we're developing a subset of OLE functionality. As you can see there's a lot yet to be done. It's in

⇨

development and on schedule for Q4 release.

The intention is to provide an underlying OLE functionality for the OS/2 user, but this is not intended to be an "OLE for OS/2 users." This is what's necessary for intraproduct communication, letting, for instance, 1-2-3 and Approach communicate.

### One of the Suite's strengths is that it works "just like the Windows version." But that's also a weakness; Lotus SmartSuite doesn't do anything much to take advantage of OS/2's capabilities. How do you cope with that "lowest common denominator" problem?

AS: I hate to say it's a tradeoff but that's pretty much what it is. That is a hard one.

MS: Lotus is in an interesting position. On one hand we want to have cross-platform compatibility between the operating systems. How best do you say this....

AS: We're definitely focused on providing our customers who live in a multiplatform environments (such as major corporations) with what they need: the ability to share files in a common file format with a common UI [user interface] and common set of features. That's our major focus; the software has to look, act, perform the same on the same data structures. That's not to say we can't exploit the features of the OS within the limitations of a common code base.

Specifically, WordPro has enabled drag and drop capability for opening a file: data, images, etc and automatically embedded into a WordPro document. We are looking at enhancements to the settings notebook for SmartSuite objects—extensions to the WorkPlace Shell where we provide additional capability for the OS/2 user. Maybe we can expose some of the data so you can get to it without starting the application.

### What about Java? What comes next?

MS: Lotus does have a Java project underway to follow the 100% pure Java initiative that IBM and a number of other companies have taken on. They will be productivity applets designed for Enterprise environments. So an individual who needs a subset of functionality will be able to download it from a server.

I can't say anything more about it today; we'd encourage readers to go to `kona.lotus.com`. The Kona people are putting demo applets up there for people to try out; the ones up there today will run under Windows 95. They're looking into ensuring that future ones will be able to run under OS/2; I'm not sure of the technical issues involved. I know we're working on it.

Certainly we're party to the Java initiative; OS/2 is certainly not excluded from that effort.

### What's Lotus (the company)'s attitude towards OS/2? What obstacles do they provide; what opportunities does Lotus give your team?

AS: If OS/2 was a part-time casual halfhearted effort we would not have a fully dedicated team of developers, QA testers, user assistance staff, program managers, product managers, and a marketing manager. That by its very nature... we're not trying to eke out the OS/2 stuff where and while we can. Lotus is totally dedicated to the OS/2 customers.

That doesn't mean that there isn't an individual Lotus rep that says "I think you should use something else." We know those situations exist. But the folks in Austin think we're a feisty group; we're definitely focused all the way up to the top of the company in getting these products out in a timely fashion.

MS: Despite the things that have happened in the recent past, Lotus really does appreciate the OS/2 user and we really appreciate their patience and understanding and loyalty.

AS: I try to hug an OS/2 user every chance I get.

### What do you think needs to be done for OS/2 to grow and prosper?

AS: For OS/2 as a client OS to continue its success, there must be solid business productivity applications available. We are totally focused on providing those applications in a complete native suite for delivery later this year. Users are dependent on a solid set of applications that they can work with.

MS: I've come to realize that the suite as an entity is "the true horizontal application." It really is a vital aspect; I didn't appreciate that as much until I had customers in front of me telling me so. We know how critical it is in the OS/2 world, and that's why we're working so hard on it.

AS: I know the critical role that we play; that's what we're focusing on because that's the best way we can contribute. It might be neat to have more utilities—but I'm intimately involved in delivering something I believe in for OS/2 users (be they individual, SOHO, or corporate America).

MS: I would generally agree with that.

### What do you see as Lotus SmartSuite for OS/2's biggest challenge?

[laughter]

AS: Getting it out the door!

I think the biggest challenge is maintaining a loyal user base with the schedules that we have. I'm hurt that we aren't there for them. I wish there was something that I could *personally* do, to get it done in the first half of the year like we originally planned. People have to make business decisions, and we're not always able to help with the schedule we have. We're doing all we can to communicate to the OS/2 user community that we're focused, we're dedicated, and we care. We care, and I know there are people out there who have a really, really hard time believing that.

MS: I'd agree with that. I'm trying to do everything I can to convince people to stay with it. We're doing everything we can, we understand your frustration. Our biggest challenge is keeping the customer

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SmartSuite 96 includes the new native OS/2 versions of Lotus Word Pro and Lotus Freelance Graphics which take advantage of the robust multitasking features of the OS/2 Warp operating system. As well as long file names and Workplace shell integration such as drag and drop of files to and from Word Pro and to your printer.

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base holding on until we can deliver a product. I go out there in front of them at user groups, and at customer sites. But we're trying in every public way we can to get out there and get the message out.

### You've been talking to user groups, lately. What have you learned from them?

MS: You finish your presentation and you're packing up. People come up to us and say, "We really appreciate your coming, we really didn't believe that Lotus cared." That happens at big customers too. I did four cities in six days and also visited major corporations; when I left we were all friends. It was partly because someone gave a damn enough to come and listen to them and take back their frustrations to the rest of the company.

### Anything else to say or ask?

MS: We're just asking the folks to stay with us, forgive us our past transgressions. I've given my email addresses out in user group meetings, but people who have questions are encouraged to call Lotus' toll free number or their Lotus rep, because we want them to know that we're here to answer their questions. And check the web site, obviously. Hit it often, as we're going to try to keep it as up to date as we can.

AS: I wanted to thank you personally for giving us the opportunity to share with the OS/2 community how dedicated and focused we are, how much we truly care, and that we have their best interest at heart in every decision we make in our development effort.

*press release*

# OS/2 Warp features delivered via the Internet

OS/2 Warp 4 and OS/2 Warp Server customers now have an easier way to get the latest features and updates for their OS/2 products with the availability of Software Choice, IBM's new software delivery program via the Internet. Software Choice offers eligible customers access to new features and updates, including those related to network computing, in advance of the next product release date making it easier to manage, test, and certify their applications.

"Our customers need to be able to add function without compromising their current application set," said Donn Atkins, vice president of marketing for IBM's Personal Software Products. "Every customer does not always require every new feature or function that we may offer in a new release. With Software Choice our customers will have the option of choosing the right feature set for their computing environment without having to rollout a complete upgrade across their enterprise."

### Features you want

Software Choice is easily accessed through the Internet and offers eligible customers several options in selecting product downloads. In addition to technical information and hot links, customers can choose from a catalog of downloadable features and updates that will be available to customer with Internet access—many at no charge. Most new network computing functions, along with the periodic CD distribution, will be reserved for IBM customers who have purchased an eligible Upgrade Protection option under one of IBM's software purchasing agreements.

By visiting the Software Choice Web site, eligible customers can download many of the features and updates that are available today for both OS/2 Warp and OS/2 Warp Server, such as Java 1.02, and Netscape Navigator 2.02. In addition, for OS/2 Warp Server customers, Network Logon for Windows 95 and NT clients, and Network Neighborhood Browser Support, will be available for download. Customers will find the Software Choice Web site at `www.software.ibm.com/os2warp`. As new features and updates become available, such as Java 1.1, TCP/IP Enhancements, and support for the IBM Network Station Support, eligible customers will be able to download these from the Web site, rather than waiting for the next product release.

### Costs

OS/2 Warp 4 and OS/2 Warp Server customers can participate in the IBM Workstation Software Advantage program with a two-year commitment of as little as $10,000 of IBM workstation software products. Customers can contact their IBM Business Partners or IBM Representative to determine their eligibility for the Software Advantage program.

In addition, customers in the Software Advantage program can purchase the Upgrade Protection Option for OS/2 Warp 4 and OS/2 Warp Server through their IBM Business Partner or Representative to gain access to future features and updates, as well as new versions and releases of these products that are announced during their contract period.

Through the Software Advantage program, OS/2 Warp 4 and OS/2 Warp Server customers will have access to the subscription content of Software Choice, as well as receive a periodic CD distribution of the applicable features and updates, with the purchase of an eligible Upgrade Protection Option. For a limited time, Software Advantage customers in North America can purchase an Upgrade Protection Option from IBM at a promotional price of 30 percent off the suggested retail price. This offer is available to Software Advantage customers through September 30, 1997.

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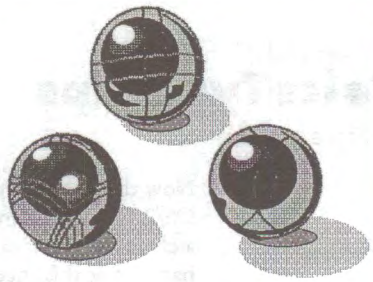

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*feature*

# VoiceType tips

*by Steve Weeks*

Steve Weeks is the owner of Speech Advantage, since 1994, a company in Virginia specializing in software related to IBM VoiceType, including Speech Advantage Medical.
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Now that VoiceType is included in OS/2 Warp 4, many people have had a chance to try it out and see first-hand what this speech technology can really do. As many have discovered, it isn't perfect and it is not as easy as grabbing a microphone and jumping in with both feet. However, a little bit of preparation and some understanding of VoiceType's limitations will help you get to a productive level of use in a relatively short amount of time.

This article will focus mainly on the dictation feature of VoiceType, discussing system requirements, pointing out where to find online information and help, offering some tips on dictation techniques, and pointing out some "gotchas" that you should be aware of.

## Read the manual!

Although there is no real printed documentation for VoiceType in the OS/2 Warp 4 box, some online resources should not be overlooked or ignored:

The VoiceType User's Guide can be found in the Assistance Center folder, under "Information ➡ Tasks." There is also a shadow in the VoiceType folder itself. The OS/2 Warp Tutorial, also found in the Assistance Center folder, contains a section on VoiceType. Finally, online help for the Voice Manager and the Dictation Window are also helpful.

I include the above because many of the most frequently asked questions are actually answered in one of these online resources!

## System Requirements

The minimum recommended by IBM is a Pentium computer running at 100 MHz with 16 MB of RAM. I would suggest, however, that for regular use of the dictation feature you should consider 32 MB as a more comfortable minimum. Something faster than a P-100 also doesn't hurt!

If you look at the README file in the root directory of your OS/2 partition you can see which soundcards were tested with VoiceType.

The Andrea NC-50 microphone included with OS/2 Warp 4 is adequate. It should work well for you as long as you are not in a noisy environment. The NC-50 has some noise cancelling capabilities, but its bigger brother, the ANC-500, has active noise cancelling and does a very good job in noisy environments. An added benefit of the ANC-500 microphone is that it comes with an inline pause switch which can be very helpful if you are interrupted frequently while you dictate. This minimizes the number of times you have to say **Stop-Dictation** and **Begin-Dictation**. Contact information for Andrea Electronics is also in the README.

Whichever microphone you use, remember to enroll VoiceType in the same environment in which you intend to use it. Enrolling in a noisy environment helps at least as much as the noise cancelling feature of the microphone, particularly if your space is very noisy.

I recommend that you install FixPack 1 because it contains some bug fixes for VoiceType, notably fixes for "lost macros," excessive disk activity when the "What Can I Say" window is open, and improvements to the Templates feature. It should also make it easier to add some new dictation words that, without the fix, can be difficult or impossible to add.

## Enrollment considerations

Although enrollment (training) is not absolutely needed, you should do it. By going through the minimum 50 sentence enrollment session, initial accuracy is noticeably better.

I would recommend doing 50 sentences and using VoiceType for several weeks, or until you are comfortable with it. At that point, if you are serious about using VoiceType further and want the best accuracy, start a new enrollment and proceed through the entire 280+ sentences. Most people are a bit nervous or have to strain a bit when first using isolated speech. Reenrolling after isolated speech becomes easy should improve the language model created by the enrollment processing step.

I'll devote the rest of this article to tips and tricks with VoiceType dictation.

## Microphone placement

The "close-talking" microphones like the NC-50 and ANC-500 are sensitive to position. Make sure the microphone is off to the side of your mouth to avoid breathing noises, and that it doesn't rub against your cheek, beard, or mustache. The ANC-500 has a little clip on the microphone's wire lead that can be attached to a shirt collar or pocket. This takes strain off the wire as you move around which helps keep the microphone element solidly in place at the corner of your mouth. You may also find that the mic headset is more stable if you remove the clip-on foam earphone piece.

## Speaking with pauses

*Isolated speech*, also called *discrete speech*, inserting a slight pause between each word, is not very natural. Most people, however, seem to adapt to it quickly. Gradually it should become more natural and take less effort. If you find yourself talking in a monotone, like a robot, try using some inflection in individual words, adding some expression to what you are saying.

You will probably watch the screen intensely at first, watching each word appear. This is natural and, at first, even useful. Don't worry if you are not very adept at discrete speech and you find yourself slipping into bursts of continuous speech here and there; probably everyone does so at first! Watching the screen gives you valuable feedback and can help remind you to insert those pauses.

After a while, though, discrete speech becomes almost second nature, and watching the screen will just slow you down. Once you become proficient you should not look at the screen. It doesn't help anything and it can disrupt your train of thought. As a bonus you will now have both your hands and your eyes free.

With practice and some use, many people see dictation rates upwards of 100 words per minute (wpm) with accuracy above 98%. It is difficult to achieve this right away but it is possible. My own optimum speed is about 95 wpm, where I usually get 98 or 99% accuracy. If I try to go faster than that I start slurring words together here and there. Slurred word errors are the most time consuming type of error to correct, so you should slow down if you make too many of them.

## Adding new words

Adding new words is as simple as correcting a recognition mistake using the correct word popup menu. If you don't see the word on the list and the word was said clearly, you should simply start typing the new word. VoiceType should add the new word without fuss. If the word does not sound like it is spelled you will see an Advanced Correction dialog that allows you to use a "sounds-like" spelling.

If you think the word is going to be a new word but the playback of the word was not clear you should dictate the word again by saying **Begin-Dictation** while the word is still highlighted. Note that you might have to delete an extra space inserted if you do this. To avoid entering new words with misspellings you can tell VoiceType to check spelling of added words. This can be turned on and off under the Options of the Dictation Window (page 2 of the Options page of the Dictation Window properties notebook).

## Dictating numbers

Numbers can be tricky to dictate because *2* can be recognized as *2*, *too*, *two*, and *to*; *4* can be *4*, *for*, *four*, and *fore*; *8* can be *ate*, etc.

VoiceType has a new feature that should make this easier. While dictating you can say **Begin-Numbers**. When you say this, assuming you have this feature enabled under Dictation Options, VoiceType actually drops temporarily out of dictation mode and into a sort of command mode, where only single digit numbers are recognized. You can then dictate a number like 242 by saying **2 4 2**. To drop back into dictation mode, say **Return**.

Another approach, one that I usually prefer, is to be aware of what VoiceType can do with numbers entirely in dictation mode. The standard vocabulary has pronunciations for numbers from 1 to 99 that are recognized fairly well. You can take advantage of the context to help improve the recognition and dictate numbers higher than 99. The same number 242 should be dictated by saying **twenty-four two**. The trick is to break the number into pairs of digits, starting with a two digit number. Starting with **twenty-four** removes the ambiguity that you face if you try to say **two forty-two** instead, which will probably result in a recognition that looks like *to 42*. This method works with longer numbers too, like 242,862, dictated like **twenty four two comma eighty-six two**. It may look a bit strange as you dictate this number but you should see all spaces removed as you continue dictating!

## Dictating letters

In a manner similar to Begin-Numbers you can also, while dictating, say **Begin-Spell**, dictate the individual letters and then say **Return** to revert back to normal dictation mode. Because some individual letters can be easily mixed up, like b, p, and d, you might want to familiarize yourself with the phonetic alphabet, where you can say "**bravo, papa, delta**" instead. You can mix these techniques and say something like "**b papa d.**" If that last **d** came out as a *p* you can correct it on the spot by saying "**as in delta**" which has the effect of backspacing once and inserting a *d*. The Begin-Spell feature is also turned on and off under Dictation Options.

You can also try simply dictating the letters without using Begin-Spell but this doesn't usually work very well.

Whether you need to dictate individual letters or numbers you should remember that there's always another option. You still have that keyboard! You can type while dictating and although it not the "purist" method, you may find it is the quickest, particularly for complicated numbers. VoiceType is just another input device and can be used along with the keyboard and mouse as much or as little as you like. In other words, use whatever works for you.

## Dictating Proper Names

The standard vocabulary comes with a good number of names, like Robert and Susan, but if you use a lot of proper names you will find yourself adding many of them as new words. The good news is that VoiceType in OS/2 Warp 4 can handle about 40,000 new words in addition to the 22,000 words in the standard vocabulary. The bad news is that if you use a lot of names you'll find yourself adding a lot of names!

## Problems

There are still some unresolved problems with VoiceType, even after applying Fix Pack 1. You should be aware of several of them because they can bite you.

If you open up the OS/2 Window List with Ctrl+Esc you will see that some programs can create some rather long names, particularly if they are of the parent-child type, where the child title is indented. If the parent plus the child title exceeds about 60 characters, VoiceType can crash with a SYS3175 error. Over about 70 characters it can hang the system. IBM has fixed this and it should be in the next Fix Pack.

Files used to store recorded speech during dictation require about 700 kilobytes per minute of dictation. If the VoiceType files are installed on a cramped disk and you run out of room, VoiceType can die without warning. Making matters worse, VoiceType does not release the disk space used by either the Dictation Window or the Quick Dictation Window until the window is closed. If you do a lot of dictation and think you might be short on space, it would be a good idea to close the Dictation Window every so often. IBM is also aware of this and will hopefully fixed the problem in the next Fix Pack.

## Going further...

That's all I have room for, though my original outline of "what to cover" was about seven pages. If you'd like me to write more about this topic, please drop me an email at `sweeks@ibm.net`.

# The application of your voice

*by John Wubbel*

With the advent of VoiceType dictation integrated into the OS/2 product, users immediately begin to think about new ways to utilize voice recognition technology to solve problems. Most people explore the OS/2 desktop, learning to navigate with voice commands or using customized macros. The second and most prominent VoiceType feature is general dictation, also known as speech to text transcription. The application of your voice goes beyond the standard features found in the IBM VoiceType product.

In most circumstances, your applications predate your installation of VoiceType. Therefore, you start looking for ways to enhance your applications in conjunction with VoiceType. Unfortunately, most users encounter limitations either with navigation or with dictation. In both cases, the limitations have to do with a lack of integration. As an example, navigation of a particular application is problematic because certain commands may not facilitate an action. In an effort to enable command and control for regular applications, voice macros aid in achieving some control.

The primary limitation using general dictation is that there is no seamless or direct means to dictate into a third party word processing application. The dictation window is not feature rich like other word processing applications. While text can be transferred from the dictation window to another word processor, this extra step is a limitation for most users.

This article will show you how to obtain additional productivity using the recognition engine technology on your system. The first part of this article will address topics on command and control. In the second part, I'll comment about potential enhancements for voice recognition applications.

## Command and control

*Why do I have limitations using my applications with VoiceType?* Let's look at some background information in order to answer this question.

Software interfaces with the voice recognition engine in one of three states. Application software is either totally unaware of the recognition engine, "speech enabled," or "speech aware."

Speech aware applications are written using a library of functions to facilitate communications between the application and the recognition engine. In other words, voice recognition has been integrated into the application. By design, most speech limitations have been considered. Additionally, application performance should be at its best.

The library available from IBM in the OS/2 VoiceType toolkit is known as the Speech Manager Application Programming Interface (SMAPI). Speech enabled applications do not take direct advantage of the library. These type of applications rely on a third party application to drive command and control or dictation. The third party applications do take advantage of the SMAPI directly to run the application that it has semi-control over.

## Custom macros

The most typical circumstance are custom applications that are totally unaware of the recognition engine and are not enabled or aware in any way. So the question is, how do you utilize VoiceType to enhance productivity while using the application, without writing program code with the toolkit? There are a number of ways to accomplish this. Among them are two advanced techniques: program macros and finite state grammars.

I would like to illustrate program macros by relating my personal experience. In recent years, I designed a medical application for taking history and physical profiles of children by pediatricians. This software was developed for clinical use on notebook computers before VoiceType was available. The application is very data intensive; it was developed to help a physician conduct a patient examination and document the interview as quickly as possible.

At first, I thought about writing the application using the speech manager library. Given the fact that the application had eight primary screens with 115 fields, it seemed like a very logical step to enhance the application with speech. However, a great deal of manual testing of the user interface revealed a faster approach to document the patient. Screen designs allowed a certain work flow by grouping data to allow quick manual navigation within the application. The majority of fields are short entry fields whereby the use of a program macro will increase the speed of common data input.

The intention, of course, was to write a speech aware application for direct dictation of text into the data fields. This happens to work well for the larger multiple line entry fields, but for the shorter fields the application is required to switch the engine mode from discrete to continuous in order to navigate to the next field. There is a certain amount of overhead when switching modes and as a result, the performance of the end user decreased. In an effort to come up with a better balance between manual navigation, voice navigation and general dictation I decided to use Quick Dictation for multiple line entry fields and the longer entry fields. Program macros for the shorter entry fields were created. The Quick Dictation is a featured dictation interface that ships with VoiceType for OS/2.

Program macros are created by naming the macro, and then capturing a series of keystrokes. To use the macro, the cursor is usually placed in the entry field prior to speaking the name of the macro. The recognition engine is in continuous mode when it recognizes the command. Once the macro has been recognized, the keystrokes that were captured during the creation of the macro are expanded into the entry field.

Here's a procedure to create a program macro.

- Start Voice Manager with the "What Can I Say" window visible.

- Start the application targeted for macro creations.
- Turn the microphone on.
- Select the **Macro** push-button at the bottom of the "What Can I Say" window.
- Select the radio button labeled **Program**.
- The Properties Notebook displays the Speech page. Select the **Create** push-button. The next dialog box is the **Edit a Voice Macro**.
- Type a unique macro name and description.
- Select **Capture Keystrokes** from the right hand list box and select the **Add** push-button to place it in the left hand list box called Action Sequence.
- Select the **OK** push-button to bring up the **Capture Keystrokes** dialog box.
- Once the Capture Keystrokes dialog box is displayed, select **Start** to start capturing keystrokes.

For example, maybe you want to automate logging onto DB2. To capture the proper keystroke sequence, you would type your user ID, press the tab key to move to the next entry field, type your password, and press Enter.

- Once the keystroke sequence is complete, select **Stop** and then **OK** to dismiss the dialog box.
- Select **OK** on the Edit a Voice Macro dialog; the system will create the macro.
- Test the macro in the target application.

To test the log on macro for DB2, wait for the dialog box to display the entry fields for logging onto the database. The cursor will be in the user ID entry field. With the microphone on, speak the macro name. VoiceType should recognize the command, automatically complete the log on, and dismiss the dialog box.

In a clinical medical application, the ability to create customized program macros gives the physician or medical staff a high degree of flexibility. Four or five macros could be applicable to one entry field depending on the particular type of history and physical being documented. Upon recognition of the command, the string captured during the creation of the macro is inserted into the entry field allowing the user to move quickly to the next data field without switching the mode of the recognition engine.

## Finite state grammars

The second means by which to utilize VoiceType to enhance productivity is through the use of finite state grammars. VoiceType for OS/2 Warp 4 shipped with a set of grammars for common applications such as Lotus Notes, IBM Works, etc. If you go to the Properties Notebook for an application, the Speech tab page 3 is for configuring the use of a grammar.

Grammars are groups of words or phrases associated with speech commands. Unfortunately, your application may be so special that none of the grammars shipped with Warp will work. In any event, the capability is available if only you could create your own grammar.

The good news is you can create your own grammars without writing any program code to use the SMAPI. IBM Developer Connection 13 (DevCon 13) contains an updated VoiceType toolkit that ships with a grammar compiler, grammar test tool, and documentation.

The Backus-Naur Formalism (BNF) is the basis for grammar definitions. Once the grammar has been written, the grammar compiler reads the grammar file to produce a finite state grammar file such as WORDPRO1.FSG. The file extension FSG stands for finite state grammar. You then configure the output file for use with your application through the Speech tab in the Properties Notebook by attaching it to the application.

This more advanced technique to improve the usability of a non-speech aware application is by no means easy for the novice to accomplish. However, most programmers can grasp the concepts and complete the task with relatively few problems. It is worth the effort to get the most out of VoiceType.

## Future applications

Thinking about new ways to utilize voice recognition to solve new problems leads beyond simply considering the integration of the technology with the top ten applications for the desktop. There is plenty of work yet to be done.

For example, the VoiceType for OS/2 seems very complete for the average computer user. However, a not-so-average user, such as a paraplegic person, would require voice control of the mouse for navigating the desktop and selecting icons that fall under the hot point of the icon controlled by the mouse. With the toolkit, this could be written as a separate utility.

Practical industrial applications abound in the field of machine control and telephony. Control of machinery remotely with voice commands might make more sense and allow greater precision than through a mechanical means such as a trackball.

A perfect example for the use of grammars is cited in the IBM documentation showing the grammars used in building kiosk programs: people walk up to a terminal, ask a question and receive an answer, even though the question might be asked in several different ways.

In the field of education, voice recognition might assist children in learning to read and pronounce words correctly because interactivity might speed the process of learning or make it more enjoyable.

In every type of application, the technology needs to be tried and tested regardless of whether or not it seems practical. Does it actually improve productivity or the quality of life, once it has been implemented? With the current VoiceType toolkit, developers can answer these questions by working with end-users to create solutions to requirements from customers in many industries.

The application of your voice is more powerful than you thought!

*the president's corner*

# Deeper blues

*by Lee Baldwin*

I have been struggling with getting this column written, because I have been depressed. Not long ago, I wrote that we (and I included myself) had to start looking at the good things we have as OS/2 users. I realized that we need to stop focusing on the pros and cons of IBM as an organization, and accept that IBM is simply supplying us with the best operating system for a desktop. The rest is up to us.

That particular discussion has been a popular one among members of the Phoenix OS/2 Society, and in fact was a direct objective of the OS/2 Marketplace conference.

The reason that I am depressed is that the company I have been working for is changing direction. Recently, my job changed from "in house technical support" for an OS/2 product to "out house installer" of the product. As a result, I have been out of town a great deal more. I have missed meetings that I normally would have attended and have gone from a semi-flake to totally flaky.

The company management has a planned strategy to take the product from OS/2 to Windows NT. Since I am the OS/2 bigot in the company, I continually make a nuisance of myself, asking questions like, "What will we do if the Windows NT product doesn't perform as well? Would we tell the truth?"

One of the head people of the company stood up last night at the meeting and said something to the effect of, "Bill Gates is going to win!" I discussed this with him afterward, pointing out that the competition is trying to reduce the cost of a connected client by $6,000 per workstation. His response was something to the effect of, "Look how much money Bill Gates has made." In retrospect I should have responded "Look how much the Colombian Drug cartels have made—does that mean that they have won?"

Needless to say it is time for me to find another employer!

## We're just the same

What got me out of my blue funk was that while I started looking for a job on the internet, I went over to the News Reader and started loading OS/2 areas. While I was there I also got comp.ms-windows.nt.advocacy, thinking I should get the other side of the discussion.

I started going through the Windows NT news groups and started laughing so hard my wife wanted to know what was going on. What I found on the nt.advocacy area is exactly the kind of stuff you find on os2.advocacy: questions, answers, points of interest, differences of opinion, sniping, yelling, spitting, lying, name calling, and humor. What made all of this acceptable and fun was that I was looking at "Them" being harassed by the UNIX people. *My* operating system wasn't at issue.

This fun, and sense of humor, is something we need to hold onto while we continue to build the Phoenix OS/2 Society. We need to remember that all of the operating systems have proponents and opponents. Some of these will be knowledgeable and some will be like my previous boss, believing that the best advertised product must also be the best product.

## Looking forward

How am I going to do on my job search? There are advertised OS/2 jobs here in Phoenix. Will I take one of those, or will I go back to the mainframe market? Will I take another OS/2 job, which I will really enjoy, or should I go for the big bucks on the mainframe? Whichever happens, at least there will be more time for the Phoenix OS/2 Society again.

# Word Pro 96 for OS/2 Warp Update

A Word Pro 96 for OS/2 Warp Update which provides fixes to a few problems discovered in the initial release of Word Pro 96 for OS/2 Warp is now available. This update is for all users of Word Pro 96 for OS/2 Warp who purchased SmartSuite 96 for OS/2 Warp or Word Pro 96 for OS/2 Warp soon after their initial release.

To determine if you should apply this update, launch Word Pro and select "Help ➡ About Word Pro..." from the Word Pro menu. If your Word Pro 96 for OS/2 Warp Release number is O70.1342.0 or higher you already have an updated edition. If your Release number is O70.1341.0, you may wish to apply this update.

## Downloading the update

The update is available at `ftp://ftp.lotus.com/pub/lotusweb/product/smartsuite/wpos2up.exe`

The WPOS2UP.EXE file is a 3.8 Mb self-extracting ZIP file that contains the Word Pro 96 for OS/2 Warp update. Be sure to read the installation instructions in the README.TXT file provided with the update.

*June meeting*

# NeoN GRAFIX and more

*by Esther Schindler*

As the weather heats up and your pool looks ever more inviting, the Phoenix OS/2 Society has to show off really cool software to get you to show up at a meeting. Fortunately, that's easy this month, since we'll be looking at OS/2 graphics applications that will simply blow you away.

Instead of the vendor visiting us, this time we'll have one of our own members demonstrating the software. Mike Briggs, who purchased his own copy of Compo's NeoN GRAFIX 3D recently, freely admits that he's spent entirely too much time checking out the software. At the general meeting on Tuesday, June 10, we're giving him the opportunity to show off why.

## NeoN GRAFIX 3D

NeoN GRAFIX 3D creates complex three-dimensional images and animations. NeoN creates virtual reality, "rebuilding" your reality. Cameras move freely in space. The interior of three-dimensional objects is no longer taboo. NeoN's output quality is top notch, comparable to broadcast television commercials. With an inexpensive retail price and intuitive interface and feature set, NeoN GRAFIX 3D Light is an ideal introduction to the virtual world.

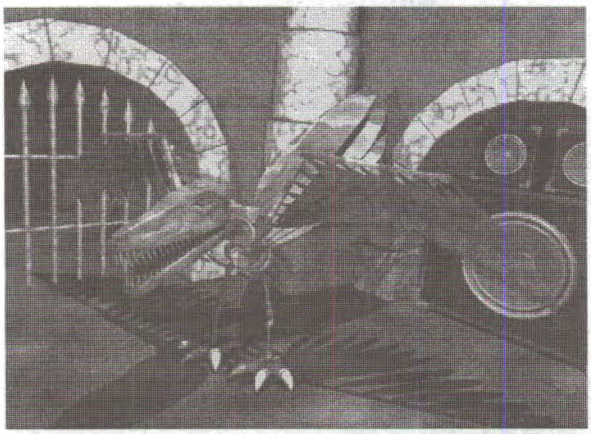
NeoN is available in two versions. NeoN GRAFIX 3D Light includes nearly all of the professional features of the full version. This is a great package if you want to produce your first multimedia production, or to study 3D design.

The full version includes more tools, more functionality, and more examples. Here, you may elastically deform objects, morph them to other shapes, and add high-class effects. NeoN's powerful Material Editor enables you to create and edit your own structures and materials. The output resolution is virtually unlimited, suitable for high-class DTP or modern movie and television formats.

(Thankfully, Mike will explain to us what all of those terms mean.)

NeoN GRAFIX 3D uses smart rendering, combining raytracing, and Z-Buffer shading. All portions of the image that don't require any effects are Z-Buffered and shaded; the raytracer takes care of features like mirroring, transparency, and shadows. The output quality will amaze you.

Depending on the time available, Mike might be able to demonstrate two other Compo products for OS/2: Storybook and Neon 2D.



## Storybook

Neon StoryBook is a multimedia presentation program that assembles information in the simplest way. The viewer only sees the information the designer wants him to see. StoryBook delivers information in all sorts of audio and video formats: pictures, slides, video spots, animations, AVIs, text, music, or voice sequences. NeoN StoryBook uses nearly all types of information formats automatically and interactively.

## NeoN 2D

NeoN 2D Vector is a totally new drawing tool, built on the basis of vector splines and bezier curves.

Layer tools and techniques enable you to structure complex graphics. You can also use layers to simplify the display by showing only the graphic elements you need, or to add comments to your work.

A very powerful tool is within NeoN 2D Vector's Multiple Copy dialog. Highly complex vector objects can be designed with this tool. Color gradients in vector objects are flexible and easy to use.

Presentation files, stationary layouts, advertisements, or even textbook and manual design may be created with ease using NeoN 2D Vector. The feature set is unbelievable, and continues to evolve.

## When and where

The general meeting will be held at 7:00pm on Tuesday, June 10, at the Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 E Dunlap. The Q&A session begins at 6:30pm; we're certain to convene at Coyote Springs after the meeting, to ask Mike even more questions about these graphics programs.

### General meeting

**what**

▲ NeoN GRAFIX and NeoN 2D

**where**

▲ Mountain Preserve Reception Center
1431 E Dunlap
Phoenix, Arizona

**when**

▲ Tuesday, June 10, 1997
▲ 6:30pm: Q & A session
▲ 7:00pm: Regular meeting

# Coming events

This is a list of events scheduled by the Phoenix OS/2 Society. Unless otherwise noted, active members may attend any scheduled event for free.

## Meeting notes

For the latest updates on the Society's event calendar, check the Web site at `http://www.possi.org`.

For meeting information and other queries, call the Phoenix OS/2 Society's voice mail at 602-949-4341.

If you have suggestions, ideas, or comments on the content of general meetings, contact the Society's Program Chair, Esther Schindler, at the general meetings or send email to `esther@primenet.com`.

**June**

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| 29 | 30 | | | | | |

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**August**

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**September**

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| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | | | | |

## June 1997

**3** net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

**3** LAN SIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Elliot Abramowitz. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

**5** Magazine submission deadline for July issue. Articles should be sent to `editor@possi.org`. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

**10** HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Coordinators Rosey Rosenwald and Stan Kropen. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

**10** General meeting; NeoN GRAFIX 3D. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

**21** Board meeting and magazine prep. Meeting is 10:00am to 1:00pm. Eat a brunch, learn about the inner workings of the Society, and help get extended attributes ready to mail. Location: Bill and Esther Schindler's house in north Scottsdale.

## July 1997

**1** net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

**1** Developer's SIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Lyle Wilson. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

**5** Magazine submission deadline for August issue. Articles should be sent to `editor@possi.org`. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

**8** HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Coordinators Rosey Rosenwald and Stan Kropen. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

**8** General meeting; ISS showing remote service management. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

**26** Board meeting and magazine prep.

## August 1997

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**12** HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Coordinators Rosey Rosenwald and Stan Kropen. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

**12** General meeting; IBM's speech technology, under the covers. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

**23** Board meeting and magazine prep.

## September 1997

**2** net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

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**9** General meeting; IBM PSP General Director Mike Lawrie. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

**27** Board meeting and magazine prep.

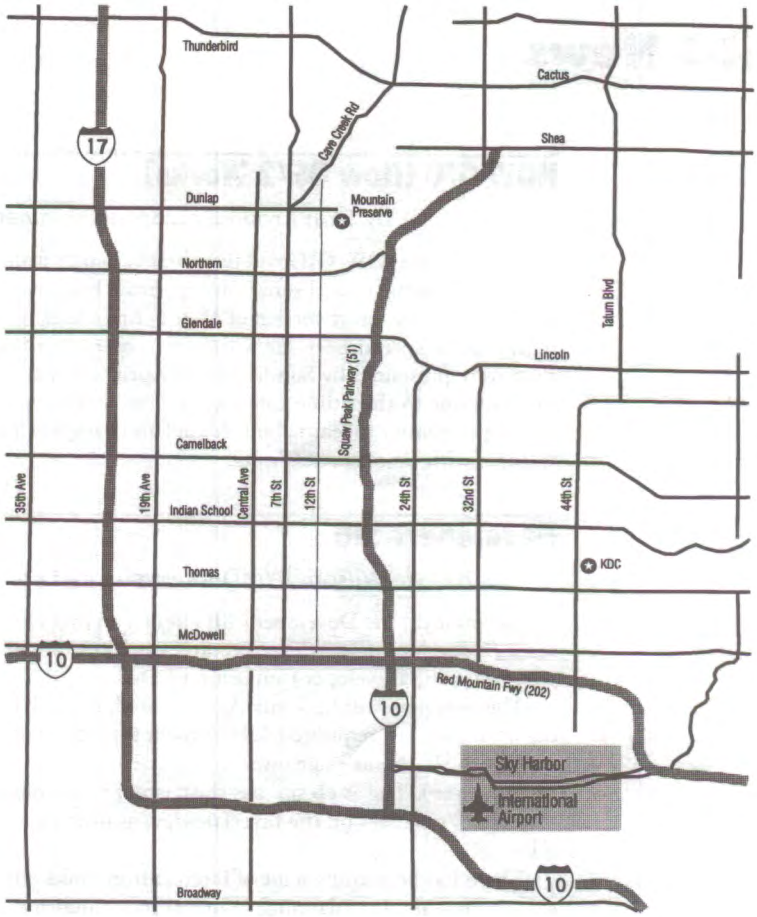
# Meeting locations

General meetings are held at the Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

From the Black Canyon, exit at Dunlap and head east. From the Squaw Peak, exit at Northern. Go west to 12th Street, turn right and go north to Dunlap, turn right, and it's two blocks up on the right.

The "How OS/2 Works General Interest Group" now meets at the Mountain Preserve Reception Center on the afternoon of the general meeting.

The Internet SIG, Developer's SIG, and LAN SIG all meet at Knowledge Development Center, 2999 N 44th St, Suite 400. That's just north of Thomas, in the building with the green dome. Plenty of free parking space is available in the garage behind the building.




If the mailing label on the back cover says "sample," then this may be the only copy of *extended attributes* that you will ever receive. If you want to keep getting the magazine (and receive all the other benefits of membership), you must join! A 12 month membership in the US is only $30. (See the form for membership pricing in other areas.) Tear out the application form, fill it in, and mail it with the membership fee to the Society's address.

*press release*

# Trade association promotes OS/2

A new international trade association for companies that provide products or services based upon the OS/2 operating system was announced at the IBM Technical Interchange.

The International OS/2 Technology Trade Association (IOTTA) was founded to expand the OS/2 opportunity worldwide and to enhance communications between IBM and member companies. The trade association was formed as a result of discussions at the OS/2 Marketplace Conference held in Phoenix earlier this year.

The nonprofit corporation is being set up by Katy Ansardi, vice president, Indelible Blue Inc; Esther Schindler, OS/2 writer and user advocate; Eileen Tognini, vice president, DevTech Inc; and Dudley Westlake, president, MSR Development Corp. All four have been active in the OS/2 market for several years and will serve as the group's initial board of directors while bylaws are drawn up and membership solicited.

Those involved note that this organization is being formed at a critical point in the life of OS/2. It has been ten years since the technology was launched, and they believe that IOTTA will provide a much-needed service as OS/2 enters its second decade.

"Increased awareness of OS/2's continued development and strong performance will benefit both customers and suppliers of the technology," said Westlake, whose company supplies OS/2 software. "I have been involved in trade associations which have made dramatic improvements in the business opportunities of member companies, and I expect this association will do the same."

Though the association is independent of IBM, which developed OS/2, IBM supports its goals.

"We are pleased to see the broad-based interest in forming this organization," said Donn Atkins, vice president of marketing, IBM Personal Software Products Division. "Promoting OS/2 awareness in the corporate community will benefit everyone as OS/2 technology becomes recognized as a component of the global Java/network computing model. We are committed to support the efforts of IOTTA."

Any company providing goods or services based on OS/2 technology is welcome to join the trade association. Moore Media Relations of San Diego has been named to manage operations and provide media relations during the initial organizational phase. Interested parties may receive more information on the Web at `http://199.72.66.91/iotta/iotta.nsf` or by calling 619-274-5959.

## HOW GIG (How OS/2 Works)

*by Stan Kropen, skropen@ibm.net*

The June 10th HOW GIG will temporarily depart from the REXX theme to add some variety. Ernie Fisch will demonstrate the latest version of Mesa2. Ernie speaks highly of this spreadsheet. He will show us more features than were presented by Sundial at the April General Meeting due to their time constraints. This will be a good opportunity to learn about Mesa2 and compare its features with other spreadsheets.

## Developers SIG

*by Lyle Wilson, RYMD80@email.mot.com*

Last month, the Developer's SIG began an overview of OS/2 development. We looked at a small fraction of what is on the Developer Connection CDs.

The overview will be VisualAge oriented, since that has been the most requested development topic from the developer SIG home page (`www.possi.org/devsig.htm`). The Web site has the current topic information. We'll meet on the first Tuesday, as usual, at KDC.

There has been quite a lot of interest from folks outside of Phoenix. I'm planning to put as much information as possible that's covered in the SIG meeting on the Web page. I wonder if Internet-based SIG meetings may be easier for people to participate in? Let me know if you are interested.

## net.sig

*by Mike Briggs, mike@possi.org*

Due to unforeseen circumstances, I once again had to install OS/2 Warp on the computer at the Knowledge Development Center just prior to the last meeting. We discussed the problem at the meeting and decided that I should look into the possibility of installing a removable hard drive on one of KDC's computers.

During the meeting we talked about Netscape and the Internet in general. It is the consensus of the attendees that at the next meeting we should further our discussion of Netscape and deal with various plug-ins and helper applications that we can use with Netscape. If there is time we will also go over the IRC and how it is used on the Internet.

## LAN SIG

*by Elliot Abramowitz, elliota@indirect.com*

For our April meeting we were fortunate in having two representatives from Accram, Jim Williamson and Burke Swanson, that deal in network services to speak about network wiring and other related issues.

If you were not fortunate enough to attend, you missed out on both an excellent presentation and a mini class in networking. Jim and Burke covered the following items:

- Topologies: daisy chain, star, ring;
- Cable types: coaxial, shielded and unshielded twisted pair, plenum;
- Connections: patch cords, patch panels, outlet plates;
- Building construction: fire stops, fire walls, air plenum, lightning protection;
- Accessories: UPS, cable harnesses, color coordination;

Our next meeting will be on June 3 at KDC. Having covered the wiring basics, I thought we would look at some of the hardware required to have the network actually run. So, Don Shilliday from Bay Networks will talk about the actual equipment such as network hubs.

Don has been with Bay Networks for a little less then two years and is a system engineer in a pre sales role. He designs networks for end customers as well as for their value added partners on a daily basis. Prior to Bay Networks, he worked at Honeywell's Network Support Center where he managed their divisions routers and hubs.

Our August meeting features Gil Day giving a presentation on Tivoli products.

If you have other areas of interest, please feel free to send me email and we'll attempt to bring speakers in on those fields. In addition, if you know of someone currently in the networking field that might be interested in giving a presentation please let me know. Check the POSSI Web page for late-breaking announcements.

# The input queue

Letters to the editor should be sent to editor@possi.org, or mailed to:
Editor, extended attributes
Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc
5515 N 7th St, Ste 5-133
Phoenix, AZ 85014-2585

We reserve the right to edit all letters for content, readability, and length.

I got my first issue of *extended attributes* and had to thank you for the "Computer problem report form." Being in a support capacity at my company, I found it very funny. I showed it to the secretary and she Xeroxed several copies and passed them out to certain people to see what reaction she'd get (people around here like to prank each other occasionally). It made a big hit!

In Esther Schindler's article, "Fun with gizmos," the review of Ray Gwinn's SIO ended with "It also provides spiffy features like VMODEM, which give you access to BBSes via the Internet." I've seen this in a number of places. This would be an idea for a future topic in that how do you do it? It doesn't seem obvious to me. Is it explained in the documentation for SIO? My brother surfs BBSes and I could pass it on to him as yet another reason he should update from just DOS to OS/2.

*Michael Pollak*

I have been involved with computers on a mature basis for about twenty years. During that time I have purchased between 100 and 300 shareware applications.

Among the older ones, the ones that are still useful, are the ones that cost me between a postcard and $10. The $25 to $150 ones I am normally sorry about. If I find a shareware program that costs only a few dollars and I use it once or twice and perhaps may use it again, I will register that shareware without thinking twice.

On the other hand, I don't even try crippled and expensive shareware that plagues the OS/2 scene. I did register MR/2 ICE without comparing it to the ones that cost twice as much strictly on price. (And I'm really happy with it.) But buying something like a seldom needed (and not always working) C-A-D Commander for $30 is out of the question. If it would cost $5-10 I would pay for it, and might buy some extras to give away to friends or during the PC users group meeting.

Can you suggest that shareware authors lower their prices? They may make more money if they are more reasonable.

*Zoltan Bokeny*

I have received my second or third magazine *extended attributes*. It's great. I like the articles and the way they are written. I have been a subscriber to the now discontinued magazines in the past but none of them included the detail and person-to-person feel as your magazine does.

I wish the club were closer to Houston. I've used OS/2 since the upgrade from 1.3 came out. It's great. I'm a home user and before I retired, I enjoyed using it and comparing how smoothly OS/2 ran compared to the Windows and DOS programs that were being used at work.

Your magazine is pleasurable to read and I enjoy following all the articles. Here in Houston there is no OS/2 club or association that you can get help from. Keep up the good work.

*Carl E Miller*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# First words

by Marilyn Pizzo

So, what's all the hype about talking to your computer? I've been doing that for years. Thankfully, it couldn't talk back to me. But now, I can talk to my computer and it will do what I tell it. (Do you think it will do windows or walk the dogs?)

To my knowledge, OS/2 Warp 4 is the first desktop operating system with built-in speech support. All you need is a Soundblaster compatible sound card, a microphone, and the VoiceType option installed. To run VoiceType, you need at least 12MB RAM, a Pentium processor running at 90 MHz, and about 25 MB hard drive space. These are minimum recommended requirements; the faster the processor speed and the more RAM available, the happier your experiences with speech will be.

## Coming to terms

Along with the name VoiceType, you might want to become familiar with some other terms.

*Speech navigation* allows you to move around the desktop using voice commands. You can manage files, folders, and windows. Navigation is accomplished using continuous speech—that is, no pausing between words.

*Dictation* allows you to enter data into a document without using the keyboard. You do this using isolated speech, pausing between saying each word to allow VoiceType to distinguish between words. The amount of pause you need to make between words will depend on the capabilities of your computer.

*Enrollment* is the process of familiarizing VoiceType with your individual speech pattern. VoiceType recognizes speech without enrollment, but its accuracy will be affected by background noise, accent, etc. Enrollment allows your speech to be recognized more accurately in both navigation and dictation and is very highly recommended.

## Getting set up

Before you start the enrollment process, you might want to check your installation. This procedure allows you to be sure the microphone and speakers are functioning well through VoiceType.

The VoiceType folder is in the Programs folder. Double-click the **Check Installation** button, which presents three tests to perform.

The speaker test involves clicking on the Check Speakers button. This is to make sure your speakers are working correctly. You may need to turn up the volume on the speakers.

Next, you can check the microphone and set input level. Be sure your microphone is turned on and the **Auto Set Input Level** check box is selected. Push the **Record** button and record whatever you want to say. Watch the audio level indicator as you speak. Yellow means your voice level is too low. Red means your voice level is too high. Green is the ideal level you want to achieve. Push the stop button when you finish recording. Push **Play** to hear yourself through the speakers.

You can also do a short Recognition Test with Continuous Speech. When you are ready, push the **Start Test** button. Simply repeat the words as they appear on the screen.

The VoiceType setup also includes a fun "voice game" you can try. Double click on **Voice Game** in the VoiceType folder; be sure your microphone is on. Name each state in the US. As you do, the state's outline will be colored in. It is fun to see if you remember all the states while checking the speech recognition.

## Enrollment

Now we are ready for the big "E": Enrollment. This is where you train VoiceType to better recognize your own voice. You will be required to read a series of commands and sentences to establish a speech pattern which will be used to build a voice model. This sounds a little technical, but it is nice to know the reason behind the enrollment process. After all, it does take a while to complete the entire process.

Enrolling for navigation takes about thirty minutes. Enrolling for dictation can take up to two hours. I found it easy to complete the enrollment in the predicted time.

If you don't have that long at any one sitting, you may break up the enrollment process into multiple sessions. Simply select the **Suspend** button. You will be prompted as to how to save your enrollment so you can retrieve it later and continue. I did try that out of curiosity to be sure the suspend function works.

During each part of the enrollment process—navigation and dictation—you will be alerted that you have completed a sufficient amount for VoiceType to create a voice model with an option to end that portion of enrollment. I recommend you complete the entire process—170 commands for Navigation, 283 sentences for Dictation. This enables VoiceType to make a more reliable and complete voice model. Besides, as you progress through the enrollment process, it becomes sort of fun. You start to catch on to how fast and distinct you must speak so VoiceType recognizes your words. How loudly you speak into the microphone makes a difference also.

If you have not tried the VoiceType enrollment or were frustrated with the number of unrecognized words... consider several factors as you speak into the microphone. You will more than likely have to experi-

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### Users' Comments

"I just found your site and wanted to congratulate you on doing such a great job in getting this site started. I've wanted to find a central place (such as www.windows95.com) for finding OS/2 shareware: what's out there, descriptions, etc. And I'm delighted to see that you look like you're going to try to make this into THE place to find this information."

"I also love having an easy place to register shareware."

"Just found this site reading OS/2 e-Zine!. Very nice. Hope you can keep it up and running as Hobbes is a hit and miss."

"Thanks a bunch for setting up the OS/2 Supersite. It's a great resource, very well done, and I hope it's a great success for you."

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ment with the location of the microphone in relation to your mouth. You don't want it too far away but you don't need to swallow it either. As you pronounce each word, it is not necessary to enunciate to an extreme. VoiceType needs to be able to tell when one word stops and another starts but letters such as t or d do not need to be overemphasized.

Another important point is that you do not need to shout or speak loudly into the microphone. Your computer is not hard of hearing. In fact, I found through experimenting with different voice levels, that a loud voice resulted in many unrecognized words. But when I repeated the sentence softly but clearly, I had 100% recognition on most words.

You do get a chance to repeat sentences during the dictation enrollment and words or phrases during the navigation enrollment until VoiceType recognizes the words. I must admit that some words or phrases I had to repeat several times before they were recognized but the cleaner the enrollment, the better the voice model you will be working with. It was fun to experiment also with the way I spoke to see how distinct you must speak.

Obviously, each computer will handle VoiceType differently depending on its speed and memory. With my new Pentium Pro at 200 MHz and 32 MB RAM, I did not have to make a very distinct pause between words. It did take me a few sentences to catch on to the rhythm I needed to use. Towards the end of the dictation enrollment I was actually starting to have fun.

You are now ready to start the actual enrollment. I would advise having a glass of your favorite cool beverage available, especially during the dictation portion. You will catch on to when you can take a sip and not mess up the enrollment. Double click the **Enrollment** icon located in the VoiceType folder. You will see the IBM VoiceType Dictation Enrollment window.

If this is the first time you are using enrollment, you will need to create a new user. Select the **Create** button and follow the instructions to set up a new user. This will create a new object on your desktop called a Speech User object. The Speech User object contains the personal voice patterns and VoiceType configuration information for that user. Each user created will have their own Speech User object on the Desktop. Everyone has a different way of speaking. Using someone else's Speech User object will cause VoiceType to not recognize your voice pattern as you speak to your computer.

After creating the user, select **Enroll** to begin the enrollment process. I would recommend that you begin with Navigation first. You don't have to do so, but it gives you a chance to get used to the process and how loud you should be speaking.

As a side note, try to do the enrollment in the same environment you would normally be using VoiceType. If you are used to having sounds in the background when you are using your computer you should train VoiceType with those same background sounds so it learns to recognize your voice pattern in the same environment. It is not necessary to have complete silence but you also don't want extreme background noises if you can avoid it.

It is very easy to follow the instructions for Enrollment. The Navigation portion goes quite quickly and is a little less challenging since it is single words and short phrases. It did seem to give me confidence that I could finish the process. After the Navigation portion of the Enrollment, you will be asked if you want VoiceType to build your voice model. I chose to go for it. Besides, I was ready for a little break.

After the voice model was built, you are brought back to the Enrollments window to begin the Dictation portion. The instructions are equally easy to follow but the process is a little more difficult. You need to remember that in the Dictation portion you must pause between words. If you pause too long you will be left behind. But don't worry, after a few times you will get the hang of it and do just fine.

When I did this portion I went through each screen several times before I started to learn (and I thought this session was to train the computer!) what volume was perfect and just how much pause and enunciation to use. Yes, you do get to do each screen over. VoiceType has an error screen that comes up at the end of a screen when there is a mis-recognition of a word. Obviously, VoiceType made the errors not recognizing my speech. That error screen came up almost every time. It definitely was a learning experience. I knew though that if I went past screens that had errors, VoiceType could not learn properly. I stuck it out through the entire process, every screen.

At the end of the Dictation enrollment, VoiceType creates a language model so it can recognize specific words. As you use VoiceType for dictation and you train it to recognize even more words, your language model grows too. VoiceType will also, over time, get better at recognizing your speech (or we will all get better at speaking).

Congratulations, you made it through the VoiceType enrollment process! I was hoping for a diploma from my computer but I'm sure that was asking a little too much. Whether you did the short enrollment, 50 commands for navigation and 50 sentences for dictation, or you completed the entire process as I did; you are now ready to use VoiceType to take command of your system. No matter if you use navigation or dictation or both, I'm sure you will have fun as well as using this new tool to your benefit.

# Bluebird and network computing

*by Esther Schindler*

In my two days at the IBM Technical Interchange, I saw a lot of things and spoke to a lot of people. I'm sure to be reporting on them in upcoming issues of *extended attributes*. However, among the most interesting were Paul Giangarra's discussion of "OS/2 and network computing," and IBM's technology demonstration of "Bluebird," the code name for "the industry's first operating system solution to address the emerging 'managed PC' environment."

## Bluebird

Rather than give my own opinions immediately, let me just paste in IBM's fact sheet that outlines the technology.

Bluebird consists of two components: a client operating environment and a set of server-side utilities to manage that environment. Both components reside on top of OS/2 Warp Server.

Bluebird uses Remote IPL technology to allow client systems to boot off of the server and access applications and user data anywhere on the network.

The Bluebird client operating environment is designed to run on Intel-based "managed PCs" and diskless PCs.

Bluebird takes advantage of proven OS/2 technology.

Bluebird will help customers transition from a traditional client/server model to a network computing environment optimized for 100% Pure Java, the Internet and corporate intranets.

Bluebird will allow users to access a broad range of applications and data ranging from:

- Pure Java
- Windows 3.x host systems
- Windows 32-bit (via third party solution)
- DOS
- OS/2

Bluebird consolidates applications and data on the server, allowing for a central point of administration.

Bluebird provides the ability to add applications or make changes to client systems at the server, which can quickly be reflected at the client system.

Management of icons on a user's screen can be performed at the server.

Users can be prevented from accessing any resource beyond a designated application or set of applications. Access to the hard disk can also be prevented if one exists.

Bluebird utilizes existing system management tools in Warp Server to backup and restore user data at the server.

Bluebird's interface can be one of many things, including a simple graphical shell, a Java desktop, a Lotus Notes client, or the Netscape Navigator browser interface with a customized applications menu.

The interface could also be a single task-specific or "fixed function" application, the first and only thing the users sees after logging on.

Bluebird provides the ability for users to log on from any compatible machine on the network and access their applications through their own user interface.

## What's that mean?

Okay—that's what IBM said. Now that I sat through the presentation, what do I think about Bluebird?

It's evident from online discussions that a lot of OS/2 users think that this is the "future" of OS/2, that IBM apparently believes we'll all be using Bluebird before long. Like many others, when I saw some indication that Bluebird was "OS/2 without the Workplace Shell" I exclaimed, "But that's my favorite part!"

It's really clear to me, now, that Bluebird is an excellent solution for a particular need. It's not meant for everyone; it's meant to solve a particular set of problems that are common in businesses, especially large ones.

In big companies, a major concern is *control*. It's considered tacky to say the word "control" out loud because users resent the implication that they can't manage their own desktops, or that the company wants to keep a firm rein on what users are doing. But it's also very obvious that the Information Services departments very much want iron-fist power over users' systems, to minimize their own support requirements. The beauty of the Workplace Shell is its flexibility; you can move icons anyplace you want. Unfortunately, the same flexibility is hell on earth for support people, who have to say, "Click on the OS/2 System Folder... uh, what do you mean you don't have one?"

For companies who have Intel based hardware and want to move to network computing without throwing out their existing systems (or who have a boatload of 386s they can't afford to part with), Bluebird is going to be an excellent solution. It's less "OS/2 without the Workplace Shell" than it's "OS/2 without icons." Company staff can preset what will run on a given workstation, and that's all that will work. The computer boots from the server (which incidentally gets a lot more copies of OS/2 Warp Server into use) and when a computer user needs or wants the full Workplace Shell, it's available and already there.

In reality, this isn't a lot more complex than replacing PMSHELL with NETSCAPE.EXE in the RUNWORKPLACE in your CONFIG.SYS.

## What Giangarra said

Paul Giangarra, OS/2 Warp 4's architect (who visited the Phoenix OS/2 Society not long ago), also did a presentation about the future of OS/2, called, "OS/2 and network computing." He spoke about Bluebird in passing (describing it as "OS/2 at the bottom, and Netscape at the top"). But he also spoke briefly about IBM's plans for full releases of OS/2 Warp in 1998, for both client and server.

In regard to the direction of OS/2, Paul said that IBM is focused on business. *Any* size business. "Big, little... it doesn't matter."

# FaxWorks Pro for OS/2

*by Craig Greenwood*

Craig Greenwood is a Comedy Magician and Charter Member of POSSI. He has been deriving pleasure from evaluating OS/2 software to some degree or another for the past 4 years.

FaxWorks Pro for OS/2 is a 32 bit, made-for-OS/2 fax program that is fully Workplace Shell enabled. The FaxWorks printer driver allows you to send faxes simply by printing from OS/2, DOS, or Windows applications. FaxWorks Pro also receives faxes and can print them to any OS/2 printer. It integrates with OS/2 multimedia and OS/2 REXX scripts for voice mail, remote retrieval, paging, forwarding, fax-on-demand, and interactive fax response.

## Basics

The basic feature set includes:

- Sending and receiving unlimited pages of faxes
- Normal and fine resolution
- Portrait and landscape orientation
- A variety of page lengths
- Drag-and-drop printing and viewing

All fax objects are listed in the FaxWorks log. These numbered entries contain information such as the date and time the document was created or received and who it is to/from. Log entries can be dragged and dropped on a printer object, on the FaxWorks workspace to view it, or on the fax document that is being viewed to append it, on most of the toolbar buttons to send it, print it, or view it in one of several sizes or orientations, or to a folder or the desktop. Without a doubt, this program is very Workplace Shell friendly.

You may be thinking, "Except for all that drag-and-drop stuff, that sounds pretty much like FaxWorks Lite that shipped with the OS/2 Bonus Pack." Well, let me tell you, this is just the tip of the iceberg. Keep reading.

## Fancy stuff

Advanced features:

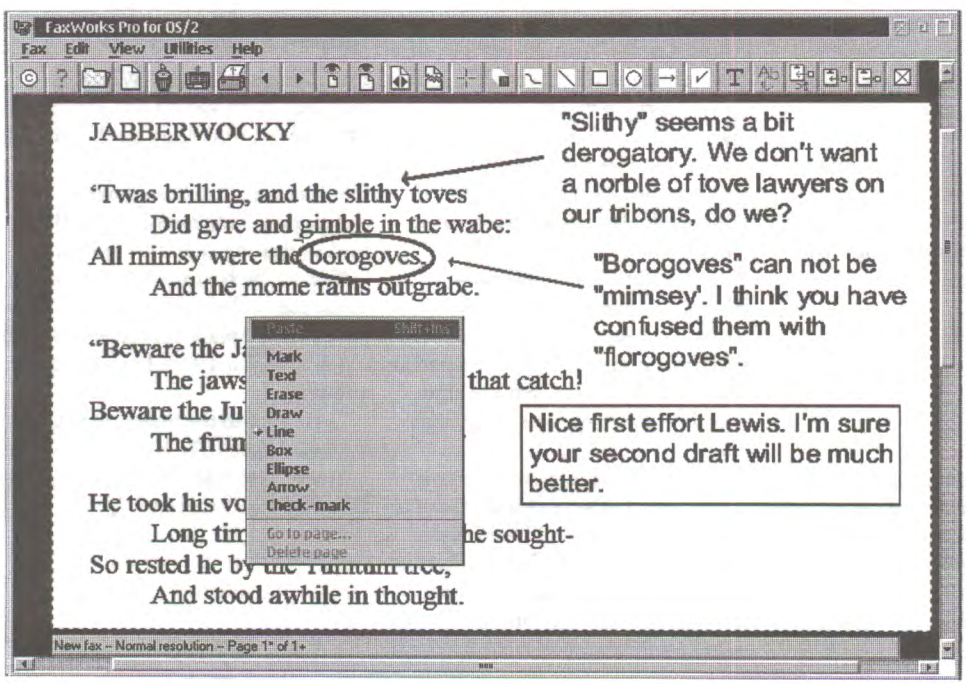
- Configurable toolbar
- Fax editing, drawing and import/export
- Automatic printing upon receipt option
- Grey-scale viewing for enhanced readability
- Multiple phone books
- Enhanced log selection and maintenance
- Optical Character Recognition
- LaserJet printer emulation (PCL5)

The toolbar can be modified by dragging menu items to it, or dragging icons around on it or off it. Toolbar configuration could not be any easier.

A fax document can be edited and marked up and returned to the sender (or forwarded to a third party). If you edit a document, the fax log will retain the original and track the edited version separately.

Several useful editing tools are provided. An area can be marked and then flipped, flopped, or rotated 180 degrees. A text tool lets you type in comments, using any installed font you like. Other drawing tools include ovals, rectangles, check marks and arrows. It would be nice if an Undo function could be added, since it is very easy to accidentally place a drawing element over some text and obscure it. You can use a size-selectable eraser tool, but it would erase the text as well as whatever else you are trying to get rid of.

Have you ever wanted to add your signature to a paperless fax that you intend to send? With FaxWorks Pro, this is a breeze. With a conventional fax machine send yourself a document with your signature. View the received fax and select the signature area by dragging a box around it with the mouse. Export the selected area as a .BMP or .PCX file, and put a shadow of that signature file in a convenient folder or on the desktop. To add the signature to a document, just drag it to the document in the view window and place it where you want it. You can use this same method to paste in any bitmap.




## Phone books

Multiple phone books can be created to help categorize your lists of fax recipients. As an example, you could have a phone book for relatives, one for business associates, and yet another for customers. FaxWorks Pro phone books support distribution groups, dial macros, and other features. You can also create phone books with a text editor or by exporting "comma-separated" data from many spreadsheets and database programs. Each phone book entry can be assigned a "group name," allowing a specific group to be selected for broadcast faxing.

The included Optical Character Recognition (OCR) capability can

convert a fax document back into text so that you can edit and reformat the text in a word processor. FaxWorks Pro can process the current page, the entire fax document, or just the marked region of a fax page, and can save it either directly to the Clipboard or to a file.

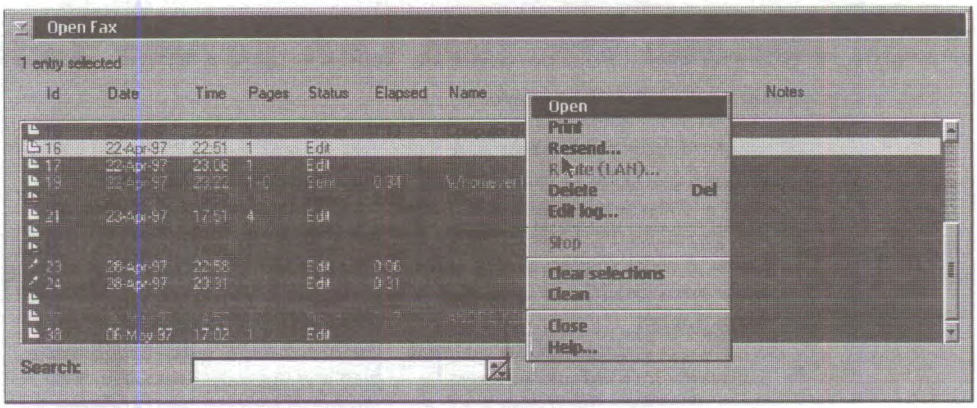
On one OCR test, *8*'s were interpreted as *S*'s, *m*'s became *ni*, *h*'s became *b*'s and the like. Sometimes it converts a single space to several spaces. It's still a big help, and could save a lot of typing in a given situation. As with any OCR engine, the accuracy of the conversion will vary depending on the quality of the original document. The best results will be obtained from fine resolution, computer-generated fax documents using fonts like Helvetica or Courier and a point size of at least 12 points. With VoiceType, though, it may be easier to read the text in instead of having to comb through an OCR document for erroneous conversions.

## There's more!

Let's see what else FaxWorks Pro has that might impress you, like it did me. Features new to version 3 include:

- Cover sheets
- Voice support
- REXX API
- Internet email faxing
- Port sharing
- Multi-character search
- Priority sending
- Hold mode
- Intelligent retry
- More LPT ports
- Caller ID support
- Translations for more than 25 languages

The new cover sheets are what I call "interactive." A fax image can be created from a combination of fonts and graphics. Then, information fields can be added by dragging them into any position on the fax page. When this is saved, it becomes like a cover sheet template. Information can be merged into this interactive cover sheet when it is faxed out. One of the things that really impressed me is that one of the included information fields can be a comment area. A signature can then be placed just under this comment field and, as the comment field grows, the signature gets pushed down the page ahead of it.




FaxWorks Pro can become an answering machine, voice/fax mailbox, or fax-on-demand system when used with supported voice/fax hardware. It does this by running REXX answer scripts; a specialized REXX API is included, with a set of functions that can be used in any REXX program to provide fax services.

Four REXX answer scripts come with the product, and a REXX programmer can modify them or create their own. That shouldn't be necessary though, as these four scripts are very functional, and one of them should meet the needs of most users. If you want to tinker with the code, by all means do so, and then share your modified scripts with others. The company also maintains a number of scripts and scripting information on their Web sites.

When using cooperating email products, FaxWorks can send and receive documents via email. This means that faxes and voice messages can be forwarded to your email mailbox. When traveling, you can access your messages and faxes simply by retrieving your email. As of this writing Post Road Mailer v2.0, PMMail v1.53, and MR/2 Internet Cruiser Edition for OS/2 v1.12 are known to work with this fax software.

*Multi-character searching* can be done by typing in the "search" field of a phone book. What was typed is compared to all the items in the phone book, and all entries with matching items, regardless of the field (Name, Company, Fax, Voice or Notes), will be highlighted and can be scrolled through.

Hold mode is a condition where any active transmission or reception is allowed to finish while disabling any further sending or receiving. This is handy for gracefully shutting down an active system, or while spooling a number of faxes that you wish to hold until later to send, without having to manually set the scheduling parameters for each of them individually.

Suppose that LPT1, LPT2, and LPT3 are already in use... well, additional printer ports can be created for use by the fax printer driver by using the LPT49 utility that comes with FaxWorks Pro. You can then install the fax printer object on any of these printer ports. What's more, multiple fax printer objects can be created on different printer ports; each of them can be configured with different job properties (page length, orientation, or resolution).

## Final Thoughts

FaxWorks Pro comes on a CD-ROM and installs in 7MB, including the voice support. I found it to be a great value. The retail price is $129, but it can be found for just under $100. Upgrade pricing is available too, from the Merlin sampler, at $69 or less.

The home user may be able to get along just fine with the Bonus Pack edition. If you don't have a modem with voice support, a lot of the bells and whistles are unusable anyway. If you are looking for the functionality FaxWorks Pro promises, then I see no reason to hesitate. Get this. It works as advertised. You will easily get your money's worth out of its bountiful supply of features.

Additional information can be found at the manufacturer's web sites: `www.kellergroup.com` or `www.globalvillage.com`.

.review

# Book review: The IBM LAN Server Source Book

*by Elliot Abramowitz and Marc Abramowitz*

The IBM LAN Server Source Book: How to Connect Your Business at Warp Speed

Pat Scherer & Charlie Brown
John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

*The IBM LAN Server Source Book* was released just prior to the release of IBM's Warp Server. With just under 400 pages, it covers what you should know in order to plan, install and maintain a small Local Area Network (LAN).

The presentation of the material is straight forward and progressive. For a complex subject, this book is easy to comprehend and presented in a easy to read manner. Using a step by step process, the authors instruct you on what a LAN is, covers the cost benefits, how to perform an installation using Warp Connect as the base operating system, and how to fine tune it. It also covers some of the more interesting and complex aspects of LANs, such as requestors and security concerns.

The material can be broken down into four sections: Introduction to networking, Installation, Maintenance, and LAN commands / LAN resources. Like all other text or manuals that administrators read or in some cases pore over, there are the ever present Appendices that we hope and pray will be useful.

In the introduction section, you learn the basic "whys" of networking, and also get an in-depth comparison of LAN Server 3.0 and LAN Server 4.0. It also helps to set the basics you need in deciding how to plan and organize your LAN. You're taught to consider your current needs, plus an insight into other areas that you should look at in planning for future growth. Remember: your LAN needs to be able to change and grow as your business does.

Installation and configuring is the next section. The chapters walk you through some of the considerations you need to think about when setting up your LAN, such as what hardware to use, what version of the software to purchase, which file system gives you the most system performance, and which portions of the software should be installed the first time and not added on later. Finally, it walks you through an actual installation with excellent discussion on what is happening and screen shots or figures used to help clarify the material. The book discusses the most common errors found during this portion, and what corrections or fixes you need to apply.

The authors go into detail on how to fine tune and tailor the system configuration files to make the most of the LAN under your current environment. Then other topics, such as security and requestors are covered.

The appendices are extremely useful. Appendix A details the differences between various network operating systems. Appendix B provides sources of additional information, should you wish to dwell further on a particular subject or topic. Appendix C tries to present a list of supported Network Interface Cards (NIC) in an effort to prevent trouble caused by using an unsupported NIC with the server software.

Throughout the book are hints, suggestions, and a plethora of graphics and tables to illustrate points made by the authors or clarify a topic.

If you use LAN Server on a daily basis, this book is a good reference source. It acts as an excellent companion to the **OS/2 LAN Server Certification Handbook**, in case you are interested in being tested on your knowledge and receiving your certification on LAN Server. In addition, **The IBM LAN Server Source Book** is also a great introduction to Warp Server, as LAN Server served as the basis for it.

.press release

# Applause bundled with Epson scanners

Solution Technology, developer of TWAIN for OS/2, BarCode Anywhere, Genie Forms Processing for OS/2, and Image Edition for OS/2, announced the availability of scanner bundles created specifically for the OS/2 market. STi has selected, and will be supplying, the Epson line of SCSI scanners along with STi's TWAIN enabled Applause Image Utility.

"We're excited that we're able to offer these scanner bundles as we are impressed with the quality of Epson scanners. The OS/2 user now has a good, high quality, native scanning capability," said Leon Zetekoff, Product Manager at Solution Technology.

J3 Computer Technologies (www.os2store.com, 1-800-787-0930 or 1-909-985-6786) of Montclair, California, will be the first OS/2 reseller to offer these scanner bundles. "This is great! A combination of Solution Technology software and Epson's hardware are a killer imaging bundle, definitely something the OS/2 community has been waiting for," said Jim Ames, President of J3 Computer Technologies.

"Epson is excited about Solution Technology's software support of our scanners and peripherals within the OS/2 environment. We look forward to extending our product offering into the OS/2 community," said Dwight Nichols, VAR Territory Manager of Epson America.

Other fine OS/2 resellers will be added to the program in the near future.

STi is a major manufacturer of production level OS/2 based image, barcode, and forms processing products. In addition, it is a principal supplier of accessory imaging support subsystems for IBM's ImagePlus and VisualInfo product line.

.review

# Remote Services Management

*by Robert Rosenwald*

Remote Services Manangement version 4 by International Software Solutions (ISS) is the current name of a product, previously named PolyPM/2, which I tried several years ago. As its name implies, RSM is designed for the remote management of PCs—to connect computers and control another PC remotely.

In RSM, the controlling PC is known as the Manager; the controlled PC is the Client. In RSM 4.0, the manager must be an OS/2 machine. The client can be OS/2, DOS, Windows 3.x, Windows 95, or Windows NT. Version 4.1 is expected to include Windows 32-bit managers as well. RSM is available in several flavors: Lite, Advanced, and Professional. The Lite version is positioned to be an OS/2 alternative to PC Anywhere. Advanced provides gateways and a large number of security features. The Professional level adds scripting to the features in the Advanced version.

Although I received a copy of the Professional version, I was unable to test a number of features, mainly through my own ignorance.

## Online documentation

I am fundamentally opposed to programs that deliver their documentation online. They seem to expect a user (whether novice or expert) to figure out what questions to search out in a help system.

Additionally, RSM's online-only help is woefully inadequate at providing background information that differentiates choices. While it might answer "What are my choices?" it never seemed to explain "Why should I choose option A as opposed to option B?"

I am not quite done complaining about the lack of documentation and the help system in general, but I will now turn my attention to the program. Professional RSM offers a plethora choices upon installation. Manager, Client, Manager Gateway, Client Gateway are the main choices. Only after talking with our president, Lee Baldwin, did it become clear what differentiated them.

The Manager component always needs to be installed on the machine that will be doing the managing. The Client goes on the machine that will be managed. The different Gateways provide for the possibility that the machine with the connection resources is not necessarily a manager or client. Thus you can set up a machine on a network with a modem, and install the appropriate gateway. Then you can install the manager or client (depending upon who is doing what to whom) on another machine on the network.

## Getting connected

According to ISS, the Lite version supports null-modem cables, high speed asynchronous modems through PSTN and ISDN, native CAPI Adapters or NetBIOS, IPX-SPX, and TCP/IP across LAN. The Advanced edition adds native X25 and ISDN across public and private networks and APPC-APPN across SNA backbones, as well as complete gateway architecture support including OS/2 and Windows gateway components. The Professional version allows the complete automation of complex communications tasks such as EDS (Electronic Distribution Systems) or ADC (Automated Data Collection) across heterogeneous LAN-WAN.

The only connections that I tried were through modem, NetBios, and TCP/IP. I also successfully tested the Client gateways using all three means as above. All worked flawlessly, although the client gateway using a modem to connect to the gateway and NetBios to connect the client to the gateway seemed somewhat slow.

Once connected, you see the client desktop in a window on the manager. By default, the client appears in 16 colors, though you can change this. It will speed things up considerably to operate in monochrome mode, since much less data has to flow through your connection.

The manager has as much or as little control of the client as the persons setting up the system provided. Users can enable multiple levels of passwords to prevent access and use by unauthorized personnel. A list of files on the client can be protected from manager modification, viewing, and file transfer. Also, the manager can be prevented from executing secured applications (i.e. payroll). At the same time the manager may be given the power to reboot the client and do *absolutely* anything (short of physically inserting a disk or turning off the power) that a local user at the client workstation could do.

File transfer from remote to client and vice-versa is fast and painless. The manager can write text on the client's screen or to draw pictures. The manager can transfer the contents of the clipboard back and forth.

Due to a lack of useful documentation, I was unable to test the scripting language. Unfortunately (as far as I am concerned) the scripting language is not related to REXX and thus would require me to learn yet another language. From what I could determine, it's possible to entirely automate RSM and any routine procedures using the scripting language, but I was unable to verify this.

The cost of RSM depends on the version and the number of clients you wish to control. The basic prices are $199 for the Lite, $349 for the Advanced, and $499 for the Professional versions, with additional license costing between $119 and $299. The basic package includes the necessary licenses for one Manager and one Client. Each workstation can have any of the RSM components installed. However, to access and control three different Clients from a single Manager, you must order one basic package and two additional licenses.

In summary, Remote Services Management is a very powerful package for controlling remote PCs from afar. It provides all the necessary tools to connect and control, subject to the restrictions you designate. It suffers greatly from the lack of a full and informative manual and can only be recommended to those who are already familiar with the precepts of Remote software.

# New on the market

*compiled by Esther Schindler*

These applications were released or updated recently.

## Extended Clipboard/2

Extended Clipboard 1.0 is a very powerful, comfortable, and easy to use clipboard tool for OS/2 Warp.

EClip features:

- Perfect integration into the WPS (it's part of the WPS)
- Supports text and bitmaps
- Selecting multiple clips will place them in the same order as selected in the clipboard
- Clips can be modified with any editor by a double-click
- Drag and drop text clips into almost every PM application!
- Autopaste allows to insert multiple clips in a row without leaving the destination application
- The EClip folder can be made floating above all over windows by pushing a special frame button

Download EClip from BMT Micro. Contact `hbecker@bigfoot.com` for more information.

## MaxBase

MaxBase is the first major Java shareware application for OS/2.

MaxBase is a database written in Java (tested on OS/2 and Win32 platforms): small, fast, and portable. It's expandable by means of plugins (small applications written in NetRexx, Java, or even native code), and highly customizable (you can translate the program from English to your language simply by changing an ASCII file). Import to and from DBF files is supported.

MaxBase is somewhat integrated with the WorkPlace Shell: an install batch file is provided and it creates a template to create new DBs. Also, by right-clicking on a MaxBase database you can either open it for local use or share it on the net (a LAN or the Internet). A WarpGuide and several documentation files are provided with the product.

MaxBase is composed of several libraries, applications, and an Applet; at the lowest level is a DB library (written in NetRexx, hence Java) which comes with its own online manual. You can use that to write your own programs, then you have a standalone non-networked GUI application, a standalone Client/Server version (the server can handle two incoming requests at once for the standard edition, unlimited for the extended edition), and finally an Applet which can be put on a web page to publish your databases on the net. The Applet requires the Server running in the Web server.

The only limitations in the shareware version is that it has a screen reminding you to register when you log into a database, and the Server accepts a maximum of two connections at a time.

All the programs in the package, excluding the installer, are Java applications.

The MaxBase home page is at `www.bmtmicro.com/catalog/mb-web/`

(Note that MaxBase, as with most Java GUI-enabled applications, uses quite a bit of RAM, so please don't expect great performances with 8 MB. Also, a Pentium class machine is recommended.)

## SFUtils

Do you have programs you want started every time you boot? If any of them need network drives, you need SFUtils!

SFUtils (Startup Folder Utilities) consists of two utilities, ObjWait and AppWait, and a helper app for setting up ObjWait.

Put the Wait utilities in your startup folder with appropriate parameters. At bootup they will start and display a dialog that indicates, "Waiting for x:". When the needed drives are available, your programs will start.

The two Wait utilities have different strengths and weaknesses. By using one or the other you can start any type of program that will run on OS/2—even a program with specific DOS or Windows settings. SFUtils comes with a detailed online manual in .inf format.

The evaluation version of SFUtils is fully functional. It can be found at: `ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/croftd/sfutils.htm`, at BMT Micro, or at the Hobbes ftp site.

Registration is $15 for a personal license or $150 for a site license.

## NetChat

NetChat for OS/2 is a small, fast personal communication tool for OS/2. It is designed to hook two people up directly (without using the IRC channels, servers, IP servers, etc.) for a one-on-one personal text mode chat.

NetChat requires Warp 3.x or 4.x with TCP/IP installed (or the Warp 3.0 IAK TCP/IP) and an Internet connection with a mail account.

NetChat for OS/2 utilizes a "Hailing feature." The hailing feature uses a built in seamless email facility to send your current IP address to another NetChat user in a specially coded email letter. The other user (who is checked into the net and has NetChat running in Monitor ON mode) will receive the message and prompt him to connect or not connect. One button hailing makes it simple and painless to connect. No other servers, email, or support software are needed.

Available at BMT Micro. Registration is $25.

## Links for OS/2

Stardock Systems has announced Links for OS/2. Links for OS/2 is the result of a partnership between Access Software, Inc. and Stardock Systems, Inc.

"Stardock's great reputation in the OS/2 market made them an obvious choice to work with when we wanted to bring our award-winning golf game to OS/2," said Bill Biggs, Access Software.

Links for OS/2 has the same standards of excellence that PC gamers have come to expect from both Access and Stardock. With state of the art graphics and sound along with taking advantage of OS/2's strong graphics user interface features, Links promises to be a hit with OS/2 game enthusiasts.

Players can display the information they want to see any way they ⇨

One bad software decision
can ruin your whole day.
Let's face it . When it comes to choosing the right utilities for your OS/2 system, you can't afford to take risks. You need a proven set of disk, file, and desktop utilities which are reliable and effective. One that supports multi-gigabyte partitions, HPFS and FAT file formats, long file names, with both PM and command line utilities. With qualified product support representatives accessible from the internet, compuserve, phone or fax.
What you need is the SofTouch Suite family of OS/2® utilities from SofTouch Systems, Inc. Our disk and file utilities improve system performance with HPFS and FAT defraggers, repair damaged INI files and user desktops, fully uninstall applications, move applications across different partitions and manage hundreds of thousands of files in directories and drives spanning multiple gigabytes of space. Our software repairs damaged partitions, rebuilds corrupted desktops, and recovers critical HPFS data files - everything you need to maintain your custom OS/2 system.
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want, whether that be multiple course views, score cards, wind conditions, and more all at the same time. Links for OS/2 is compatible with existing Links .CRH golf courses that are widely available.

Stardock's Web site is `www.stardock.com`. Links for OS/2's list price is $49.95 though numerous introductory prices are available.

### Mouse and system enhancer

MSE (Mouse and System Enhancer) is designed to make mousing about the old desktop a bit easier. It allows you to assign various commands to your mouse buttons with or without keyboard modifiers. It also provides optional clipboard management and extension, swapfile monitor, desktop clock, virtual desktops, screen capture, file dialog enhancement and some other mouse-related options. Sorry, kitchen sink not included. MSE requires OS/2 Warp (3.x+) or better.

MSE is page-tuned, which means that any parts you don't use don't take up valuable memory, and seldom-used parts take up memory only while in actual use, and can then be swapped out until the next use. In other words, it plain old fashioned doesn't use any more memory than absolutely necessary at any given time.

Shareware, available at BMT Micro. Registration $25 .

### XG DSP

XG DSP is an OS/2 PM DSP editor/controller for Yamaha XG (SW60XG and MU80) devices. More than 100 controls are available to modify the three effect processors in real-time, and can be saved to any of 32 fully-programmable presets. XG DSP is for modifying external input sources (CD, line-in, and mic). The processed output can be routed to a sampler for saving in digital format, or back to the stereo system (with excellent results).

XG DSP is an OS/2 PM application. MMPM/2 is not required (but is okay), nor are any soundcard drivers. This package includes everything you need to control the A/D section of your Yamaha. The DB50XG does not apply, since it does not have an A/D section.

Shareware, available at BMT Micro. Registration: $49.

### CapiTel 2.0

CapiTel is a 32-Bit Multi-Threaded ISDN Answering Machine, featuring:

- Graphical and text-mode versions for OS/2, based on CAPI 1.1
- Graphical and text-mode versions for Windows 95/NT, based on CAPI 2.0
- Complete support for WAV files
- Remote control functions, controlled by DTMF tones.
- Silence detection
- Completely configurable

CapiTel can be found at `www.oche.de/~cawim/capitel.html`.

### BootSet

BootSet allows batchfiles to run during the OS/2 boot sequence. BootSet is normally run before the graphic part of OS/2 (Workplace Shell) is loaded. As a result, you can perform tasks that are impossible when the WPS is loaded, such as replacing system files like DLLs, drivers, and CONFIG.SYS.

Optionally, you may use BootSet to select different startup configurations using the reboot feature of BootSet.

BootSet is similar to the Alt+F1 feature of OS/2 Warp but is not restricted to Warp. BootSet should (but is not tested to) run with both OS/2 2.0 and OS/2 2.1 (and Warp). BootSet requires IBM OS/2 2.0 or later, although it has only been tested with OS/2 Warp Connect, OS/2 Warp 3.0 and 4.0. BootSet will *not* work on OS/2 Warp 3 with Fixpack 17 till Fixpack 21 due to a bug in these fixpacks.

Available from BMT Micro. Registration is $15.

.press release

# Dataquest forecasts strong growth for OS/2 servers

A recent report published by industry analyst firm Dataquest forecasts a five-year compound annual growth rate of 20 percent for OS/2 server licenses through the year 2000, nearly double that of Novell IntraNetware and all UNIX platforms.

The report, published in March, calculates year-to-year platform growth from 1996 through 2000 for all major PC server operating systems. OS/2 finished second only to Microsoft Windows NT Server.

"The results of this study demonstrate that OS/2 is continuing to grow in the highly competitive server operating system market," said Donn Atkins, vice president of marketing, IBM Personal Software Products division. "But these results have implications that go beyond market share numbers—they reflect IBM's strong commitment to OS/2 and the millions of customers that depend on it every day for the well-being of their business."

### What Dataquest has to say

The following is excerpted from Dataquest's 3/31/97 report titled "All Platform Operating System Sa[illegible] Forecast Summa[illegible]—March 1997."

"IBM's commitment to OS/2, while unwavering, shows signs of refocusing in areas that are expected to reap the largest rewards... On the server side, Dataquest anticipates quite strong growth... based on Notes/Domino shipments and IBM's ability to successfully target its base."

"IBM's strength lies in its relationship with its customers. IBM is continuing to show signs of investing in OS/2, not only as a technology, but also as an opportunity, with all the marketing and support resources that are a requirement for a successful product ..."

Dataquest calculates its results through end user based surveys, gathering data from the OEMs, and receiving input from the operating system vendors.

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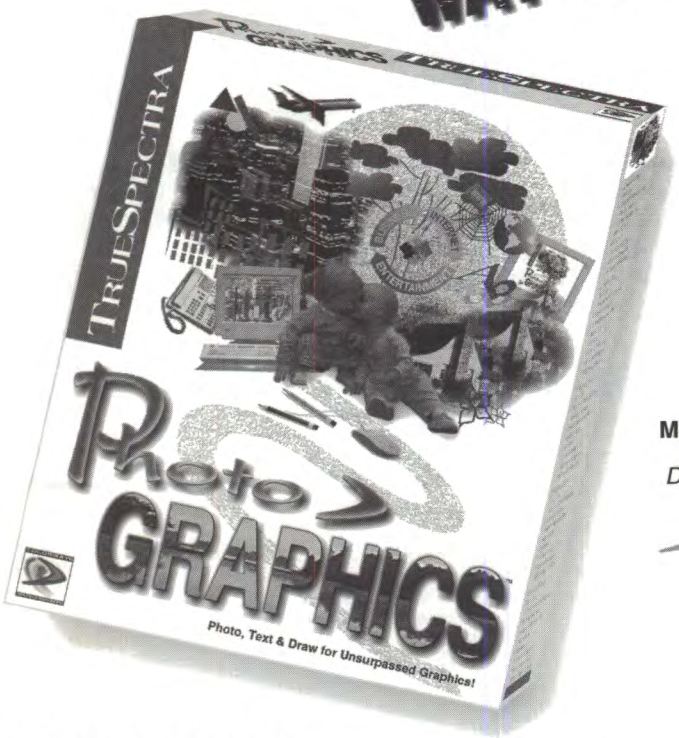


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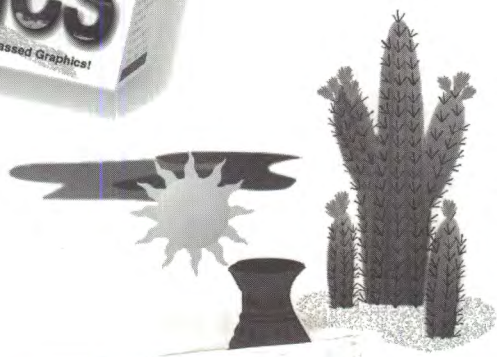

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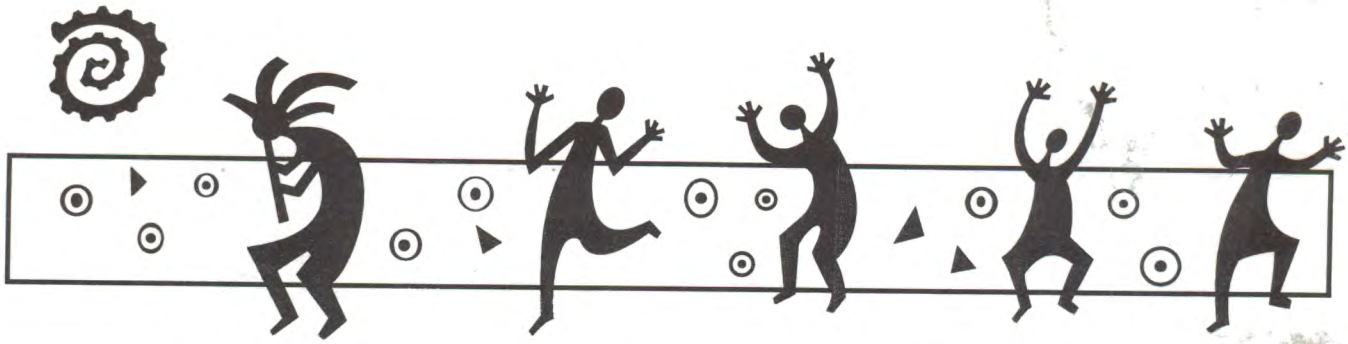

# The Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc

The Phoenix OS/2 Society is a computer user group dedicated to OS/2. We have been publishing our award-winning magazine, *extended attributes* since August of 1994, and we have members all over the world.

Yes, this is a user group publication, and that sometimes shows; however, that's also an advantage, since you get real-world feedback about OS/2 and OS/2 products from other users, not just jaded, cynical journalists.

How useful will it be to join the Phoenix OS/2 Society if you aren't in Arizona? We see the Phoenix OS/2 Society as something akin to the National Geographic Society or the Smithsonian; while most members only see a magazine, you're actually a member of a society, and can participate in its activities when you happen to be in the area.

Even without activities that take place in Phoenix, Society membership includes product discounts that alone could make membership worthwhile. Taking advantage of one such discount could easily save you the entire cost of membership, giving you a "free" subscription.

Plus, the Society is prominent in the computing community. We are *already* heard by IBM; they listen to what we say. Several IBM executives get *extended attributes*. They don't get it for the "club news"—they use it to learn what OS/2 users really care about. And they respond to what they read.

You're not just getting a magazine. You're getting a voice.

If you would like to continue to receive the magazine, fill out the membership card in the center of the magazine. We would love to have your voice join ours!

# Invites you to join

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**5515 N 7th St, Ste 5-133**
**Phoenix, AZ 85014-2585**

Phoenix OS/2 Society

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